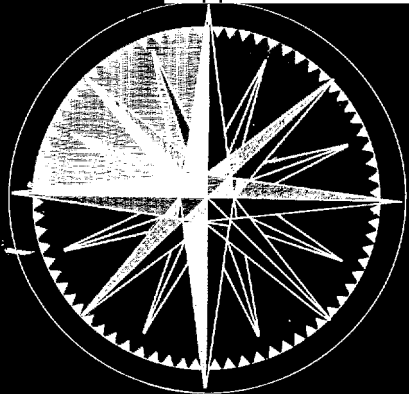


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ZAMBIA'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

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ZAMBIA'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

The Rhodesian crisis is highlighting many conflicting domestic pressures on President Kenneth Kaunda's government in Zambia. These forces are in some ways almost unique for the new African countries. Zambia's major industry, copper mining, depends on the continued efforts of a skilled white minority that mostly sympathizes with Salisbury's defiance of London. Zambia's labor force, the most highly organized in Africa, is at odds with Kaunda's governing United National Independence Party (UNIP) over control of African interests in the Copperbelt. A few militant elements urge direct aid to the Rhodesian nationalists in seeking to promote civil war in Rhodesia. At the same time, Kaunda faces the problem of dealing with the majority of his countrymen who remain largely untouched by the modern world --a problem common to most leaders of new African countries.

Kaunda and his ministers have managed to keep these divergent forces from upsetting the main lines of his generally moderate policy. As the Rhodesian crisis extends, however, pressures may increase, especially if the measures Kaunda himself undertakes precipitate an economic breakdown in Zambia. Recent signs of an increasingly emotional approach to Rhodesian matters suggest that the present nominal consensus in Zambia may be severely tested.

King Copper

Copper dominates the politics and economics of Zambia. As the world's second largest producer, after the US, Zambia is one of the most prosperous African countries. Sixty percent of the government's revenues and 90 percent of the country's export earnings come from copper. The world copper boom has sent foreign exchange holdings steadily upward, most recently reported at over \$190 million in February.

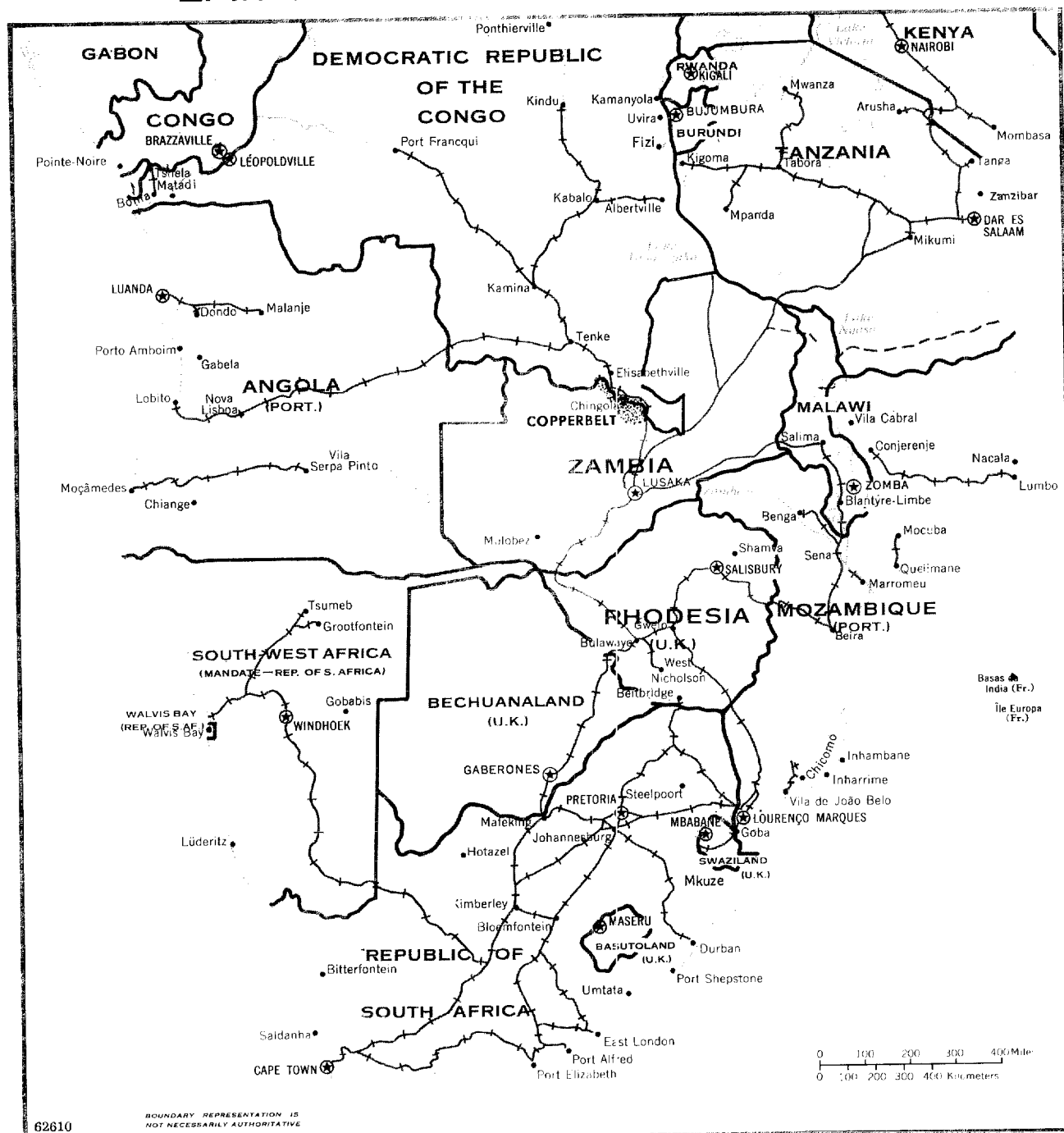
On the assumption that the copper-based prosperity will con-

tinue, Zambia's leaders have undertaken a development program which is impressive by African standards. An 18-month \$98-million transitional plan terminates at the end of this month. Top priority goes to education, with primary education provided to all children by 1970 as the target. Other programs are concerned with agriculture, natural resources, communications, power, health, and housing. The government intends to increase the level of development programs substantially under a four-year plan beginning in July.

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Zambia's one-product economy is vulnerable, however. Almost all the copper reaches world markets by the rail route through Rhodesia and Mozambique. Rhodesia, in turn, supplies all of Zambia's coal and coke and two thirds of its electrical power, mostly from the jointly owned Kariba generating station located in Rhodesia. Because of this vulnerability, when the Smith regime declared Rhodesia's independence last November, the Kaunda government took a moderate line in marked contrast to most other African states.

Role of the Whites

In shaping its Rhodesian policy the Zambian Government is mindful of its dependence on the services of a small minority which sympathizes with Salisbury's defiance of Britain. The white expatriates are the only people in Zambia with the skills to run the copper mines or to promote large-scale economic development. President Kaunda has attempted to keep them on the job.

The whites number about 70,000, or less than two percent of Zambia's 3.7 million population, and they fill nearly all of the supervisory and skilled positions--in the civil service as well as in the mines. Although termed "Europeans," most of them came from white-dominated social structures in preindependent Zambia, South Africa, and Rhodesia. They maintain strong ties with the southern neighbors.

The government's acknowledgement that the whites' special

privileges must be maintained has so far restricted the post-independence white exodus to a few thousand, many of them dependents. European mineworkers receive wages at a rate two or three times that of Africans in similar jobs, and fringe benefits widen the disparity further. Unless these inducements dwindle or racial violence rises, most whites appear willing to stay in the country for the present.

Nationalist Pressures

The demand of many Zambians to destroy the expatriates' entrenched position is the main stimulus for what is loosely termed "nationalism." In Zambia the word also refers to the desires of labor, tribal, and political organizations to obtain large postindependence benefits.

The government's greatest "nationalist" problem comes from the 700,000 urbanized Africans, who regularly see the whites' superior position. Most of these Africans are less than a generation removed from tribal society, and beneath their modern aspirations, they retain much of their traditional culture. They tend to be impatient, parochial, and suspicious of those who are not tribal kinfolk (or now, for example, fellow mineworkers). With little education, they do not understand why the whites must remain or why some cooperation with Rhodesia is important.

Zambian "nationalism" focuses on the Copperbelt, where two issues are ready-made:

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"Zambianization," i.e., the replacement of Europeans by Zambians; and ending the disparity in pay scales between Europeans and Africans.

In the first year of independence, the government successfully outmaneuvered Communist-trained elements who seized on these issues and threatened racial violence and economic instability. Union prerogatives concerning finances, international affiliations, and the right to strike were restricted. This increasing supervision prompted many responsible labor leaders to leave the movement for more rewarding positions, however, and in several instances their places were taken by militant figures uninterested in submerging labor's interests to the national development program.

Union and Party

The key element in the labor picture is the Zambia Mineworkers Union (ZMU). Over the years it has built a union structure which is probably the best organized in ex-British Africa. The ZMU has extensive political and social as well as economic influence in the Copperbelt, and the Lusaka government views it as a major obstacle to its program. Furthermore, local leaders of the national governing party have put pressure on Lusaka to get power out of the mineworkers' hands.

Twice this year the central government has attempted to sup-

port a party take-over of the mineworkers union. During the union elections in February an ill-conceived frontal assault was organized. Physical intimidation and a UNIP-sponsored slate of high regional officials, many of whom had no labor union experience, failed to prevent a solid victory for the ZMU's established leaders.

UNIP Copperbelt leaders organized a strike in April to protest alleged union failings with regard to a recent wage contract. Local UNIP officials lacked coordination or direction and soon expanded their campaign to include vague charges against the copper companies and whites in general. The union then entered the dispute, restricted itself to the popular issue of higher wages, and won control of the strike.

This second party failure has forced the national government to change its tactics toward labor and local party pressures. Kaunda reportedly now is attempting to extend his personal influence over labor relations. He shook up his party's Copperbelt section in order to tighten control and discipline. The US Embassy in Lusaka sees some indications that the party intends to renew its assault on the union. For the time being, however, Kaunda's statements and actions suggest a retreat to a conciliatory policy toward the unions as long as they follow broad guidelines set by the government.

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Back in the Bush

The interior also presents problems. In February, and again in April, the government felt it necessary to send scores of party leaders into the countryside to assure the people that they were not being neglected.

Popular dissatisfaction, again involving party militants, is growing, particularly in the Eastern Province, but the only measurable effect so far has been a poor response to registration for local elections. There has been some talk of an effort to replace the national leadership and of secession of the province, but no organized grouping is known to support such ideas.

In the neighboring Northern Province, over 700 lives were lost two years ago when larger numbers of similar young UNIP "toughs" confronted a fanatical religious sect opposed to a fast-moving government.

The more backward western province of Barotseland presents unique problems. Barotseland came under British rule before the rest of the country and in colonial times the Lozi tribal chieftains retained a high measure of autonomy. When, before independence, it was agreed to place Barotseland totally within the Zambian superstructure, certain local powers were reserved to the tribal aristocracy. Since independence the national government,

encouraged by landslide victories by UNIP in local elections, has steadily moved to eliminate Barotseland's special prerogatives.

As a result, Lozi hostility to Lusaka's rule has intensified. Tribal leaders have reportedly raised the threat of secession and, illogically, of allying themselves with neighboring white-ruled countries. Newly formed or reorganized political parties, acting independently of the ruling aristocracy, are also agitating against the national government to further their own positions. The traditional forces have succeeded in rallying support despite popular demands for modernization.

Nevertheless, the political and military capability of the Lozi traditionalists is low. Even their political authority inside Barotseland is undermined to some extent by the activities of leading members of the tribe in the inner councils of UNIP and the government. A few top proponents of forceful action have been arrested. In order to ease tensions, Lusaka has postponed its campaign to restrict traditional powers. If Kaunda continues to avoid heavy-handed action, Barotse opposition is unlikely to become more than a thorny long-term irritant.

Kaunda's Control

President Kaunda has managed Zambia's divergent

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interests largely through the force of his own personality and by means of his UNIP party. His success has allowed the police and army to remain essentially in the background and free of political maneuvering.

Kaunda [redacted]

[redacted] derives political strength from his ability to balance the disparate elements in the government and thereby maintain a general consensus--in large part predicated on a commitment to early and massive national development. As the country's only prominent figure of non-Zambian parentage (his parents were Malawian), he is free of tribal and regional suspicions. This, plus his clear devotion to national progress, provides Kaunda with a prestige and an acceptability unavailable to any other current Zambian leaders. [redacted]

Kaunda's goal of national consensus requires, first of all, consensus within UNIP. The party has become the basic umbrella for Zambians in search of modernization and its leadership corresponds with the government's hierarchy. UNIP now is a ready arena for the disruptive expression of Zambia's political pressures. Its membership, which mirrors Zambia's divisive tribal and regional sympathies, lacks discipline and coordination and is a focal point for pressures from militants who

want to challenge Kaunda's consensus.

To a large extent, however, the potential opponents to Kaunda within UNIP are hampered by their regional character. Foreign Minister Simon Kapwepwe, the only credible challenger at the present time, still has to modify his open favoritism to his Bemba tribe--the most important in the Copperbelt--to win wider acceptability or to make any other attempt to undermine Kaunda's position. Other potential adherents of a militant opposition, such as Vice President Reuben Kamanga or Home Minister Mainza Chona, are similarly restricted and enjoy smaller popular bases in less significant areas of the country.

Of the two other significant political parties, one is tribally oriented and the second is a grouping of white expatriates which recognizes its political impotence and the need for accommodation with UNIP.

The apolitical 7,000-man police force would be the key element in dealing with any forceful opposition to the government. Its capabilities are high by African standards, and the police probably would have little difficulty in suppressing localized African outbursts. Many experienced Africans have high positions in the police, "Zambianization" is proceeding rapidly, and racial friction is low. The departure of many of the European officers nevertheless is decreasing the efficiency of the police.

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In contrast, the 2,800-man army is just getting established, with the mission of supporting the police. It is largely white led, and the government foresees the need for white officers in senior positions for many years. Consequently Zambianization pressures are high. Out of concern for the grumbling among the few low-ranking Zambian officers, Lusaka may promote them at a rapid pace. For historical reasons, the African core of the army is composed of Malawians, which provides a further cause of irritation. Its small size and an almost nonexistent military capability prevent it from posing any serious threat of mounting a coup in the foreseeable future.

Impact of Rhodesian Independence

In many ways, the demands of coping with the Rhodesian problem since Ian Smith's government declared its independence have emphasized the consensus, more so than the differences, among the principal national figures and have confirmed the leading position of Kaunda. The most militant Zambian leaders may not completely understand all the complex ramifications of the Rhodesian confrontation, but they appreciate that they are enormous. There is a common enemy in Rhodesia, a common wariness toward the foreign country--Britain--with the greatest influence over the destinies of Rhodesia and Zambia and a common acceptance of a unitary Zambian government to direct national development.

Thus militants have not hastily blamed moderates for decisions predicated on caution.

On the other hand, Zambia could yet founder on the Rhodesian issue. Premature economic action against Rhodesia, retaliation by Salisbury to Zambian policies, the further polarization of racial sympathies inside Zambia, all could lead to spiraling economic hardships, internal security problems, and eventually public discrediting of the present government and demands for a new regime.

Zambian frustrations may lead to stepped-up government support for Rhodesian nationalist movements. In the past, Zambia has allowed the two principal exile groups to establish offices in Lusaka for organizational purposes, but has generally denied them military potential inside Zambia. The government wants to avoid both a complication of its own internal security problems and a racial war in southern Africa.

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25X1 The recent dispute over payments for rail shipments through Rhodesia suggests that Zambian policies are increasingly influenced by emotional rather than practical considerations.

The internal effects of a lengthy rail cutoff or general economic boycott might be devastating. For several months, the amount of aid Britain and other countries can provide Zambia would be insufficient to prevent severe economic hardship. The extent of long-term damage would depend on the timing of the break, on whether it were total or partial, on British and Rhodesian reactions, and on the success in overcoming technical stumbling blocks to sustaining Zambia by alternate transport and supply sources. The psychological reaction to a rationed economy is perhaps most important. Racial violence, the

flight of large numbers of white expatriates, and a radical turn of popular feeling against the government are all dangers if economic hardships seriously affect daily living.

Unless Salisbury capitulates and returns to British rule, Britain's substantial moderating influence in Zambia is certain to decrease. If the British agree to Rhodesian independence without ensuring the steady advancement of African Rhodesians toward majority rule within a short time period, the US ambassador in Lusaka believes that Zambia probably would break diplomatic relations with London or might even leave the Commonwealth. However, an official relationship could continue if Britain supplies important assistance to Zambia's efforts to permanently disengage from economic ties with Rhodesia. To the extent that US policies are identified with Britain's, US relations with Zambia would also suffer.

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